

Retraining Assistance Program Process for Review of Retraining Assistance Program

The following process is used by the Accountability Division for the review of the Retraining Grant. Throughout the process representatives from the Accountability Division consult and work with representatives of the State Department of Education responsible for the implementation of the program.

(1) Statutory Authority

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 (§59-18-1560) establishes grant programs for schools designated as below average or unsatisfactory: "The State Board of Education, working with the Accountability Division and the Department of Education, must establish grant programs for schools designated as below average and for schools designated as unsatisfactory. A school designated as below average will qualify for a grant to undertake any needed retraining of school faculty and administration once the revised plan is determined by the State Department of Education to meet the criteria on high standards and effective activities. A school designated as unsatisfactory will qualify for the grant program after the State Board of Education approves its revised plan. A grant or a portion of a grant may be renewed annually over the next three years, if school and district actions to implement the revised plan continue. Should student performance not improve, any revisions to the plan must meet high standards prior to renewal of the grant. The revised plan must be reviewed by the district and board of trustees and the State Department of Education to determine what other actions, if any, need to be taken. A grant may be extended for up to two additional years, if the State Board of Education determines it is needed to sustain academic improvement. The funds must be expended based on the revised plan and according to criteria established by the State Board of Education. Prior to extending any grant, the Accountability Division shall review school expenditures to make a determination of the effective use of previously awarded grant funds. If deficient use is determined, those deficiencies must be identified, noted, and corrective action taken before a grant extension will be given."

(2) Criteria for Evaluation

The criteria used for the review of the Retraining Assistance Program include the following, drawn from the State Board of Education-approved *Professional Development Standards for South Carolina*. The most important element of the retraining assistance program is the improvement of student learning. During the initial two award years, the use of retraining assistance funds is reviewed and presented as advisory only; the third year review is provided to the State Board of Education for its consideration during deliberations to determine if the grant is to be extended. Student achievement data are considered in the third year review. The reviews in each of the three years consider effective use against the professional development standards shown below. Sample indicator questions, drawn from the sample indicators for each listed standard, are also included.

- Standards 3, 4, 5 and 7: Funds are expended in a manner to accomplish the acquisition of new behavior and long-term skill improvement by all teachers. Sample indicator questions include:
 - ✓ Are professional development activities scheduled to ensure time for recipients to learn together and improve practice?

- ✓ Is time for professional development activities provided during the work day (e.g., common planning time, peer observation, etc.)?
- ✓ Are all stakeholders in the school involved in the determination of the professional development activities to be conducted?
- ✓ Are professional development activities held at a time when all stakeholders can attend?
- Standards 2, 4, 5, 9 and 11: Funds are expended in a manner that addresses the three phases of the change process: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization. Sample indicator questions include:
 - ✓ Do school leaders participate with staff in professional development activities?
 - ✓ Are all stakeholders in the school involved in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the professional development activities conducted?
 - ✓ Is collaboration occurring among the teachers at the school to support change and innovation?
 - ✓ Are the professional development activities designed to relate to ongoing programs at the school?
 - ✓ Are follow-up opportunities provided for all professional development activities, and are the follow-up opportunities monitored and supported with human and financial resources?
- Standards 4, 6, 7, 8 and 11: Funds are expended on activities chosen through data-driven decision making, that are research-based and provide theory, demonstration, practice with feedback, and follow-up for all participants. Sample indicator questions include:
 - ✓ Are professional development activities aligned with the school improvement plans?
 - ✓ Are the professional development activities chosen after careful analysis of disaggregated data?
 - ✓ Are professional development activities designed to address gaps in achievement among all student groups?
- Standards 6, 7, 8 and 11: Funds are expended in a manner that recognizes differing levels of educator expertise (i. e., diverse participant needs) in regards to content knowledge and pedagogical practices. Sample indicator questions include:
 - ✓ Are the professional development activities presented by credible providers?
 - ✓ Are the professional development activities presented in multiple formats (e.g, action research, self-study, training, etc.)?
 - ✓ Do all training activities provide theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching opportunities?

As part of the process at the school level, schools should use the Staff Development Self-Assessment Rubric developed by the Office of School Quality to ascertain if the professional development activities scheduled for the school meet the *Professional Development Standards for South Carolina*.

(3) Data Sources

- Guidelines for Retraining Assistance Program
- National Standards for Professional Development
- Professional Development Standards for South Carolina
- School Renewal Plans
- School Survey Responses
- Student achievement data (PACT, HSAP, EOCEP, AP, etc.)

(4) Time Line

	<u>Time frame</u>	<u>Involved Parties</u>
Superintendents notified survey to be sent to the principals	late April/early May	EOC, LEAs
Survey sent to principals, with instructions on how to complete the survey, including response deadline, assistance available from the Accountability Division	early May	EOC, LEAs
Superintendents notified of response status of schools in district regarding the survey	mid-June	EOC, LEAs
Final deadline for survey submission set	late June/early July	EOC, LEAs
*Superintendents notified of schools that did not reply to survey	mid-July	EOC, LEAs
*State Board of Education notified of schools that did not reply to survey	mid-July	
Analyze non-achievement components of the data, including survey on demographics and attitudes, activities reported by the schools and the School Renewal Plan	July-August	EOC, SDE
Notify superintendents and principals of non-achievement data analysis, request feedback on analysis, deadline three weeks after sent	October	EOC, LEAs
Add school achievement data to other data	As available	EOC
Provide draft to superintendents and principals of schools, request documentation of inaccurate data	mid-November	EOC, LEAs
Present final report to EIA Subcommittee and full EOC	mid-December	EOC
Forward recommendations to SBE, following EOC Action	mid-December	EOC

*These steps provided in accordance with Proviso 1A.48: "Furthermore, any school that does not provide the evaluation information necessary to determine effective use as required by Section 59-18-1560 is not eligible to receive additional funding until the requested data is provided as outlined in the program guidelines."